

## Chris's Reordering Blog – Week 18 & 19, 2 to 13 October

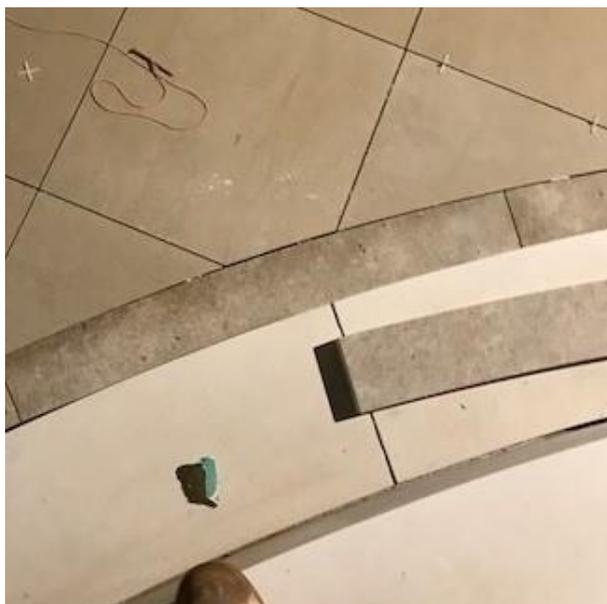
I explained last time the difficulties the contractor was experiencing because the Chancel was not exactly square with the Nave. Well, here we go again, this time not a problem with alignment but with level differences. We knew that the Sanctuary wasn't completely level, but how to deal with this proved not to be straight forward. In fact, there was a 45mm level difference, (nearly 2") between the north and south end of the Victorian Chancel step.

You might expect issues with the construction of the Chancel since it was built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but the steps and the tiles on the floor in the Sanctuary are Victorian and once again we are seeing disappointing construction errors in the Victorian workmanship. I'll bet those of you who have knelt at these steps for many years, some of you *very* many years, have never noticed this level difference. That's because the step is dark in colour and the Chancel floor is not level either!



I had hoped we could deal with the level differences and still retain the Victorian tiles in their existing position. To do that, the steps would have to be laid on a slope and that is just not on and I agree with the views of both Wrencon's mason and the architect that the steps must be level. A keen eye would see it was not level and that would never be acceptable.

You can also just about make out the level difference in the picture. The steps are at the same height as the top of the tiled floor on the left-hand side



of the picture but certainly not at the right. This means that the Victorian tiles will need to be lifted and re-laid level. Now, we don't yet know if they can be lifted without damaging them, but Wrencon's guys will do their very best to do that. There will of course be an additional cost to do this but it is something that the architect had anticipated and a 'provisional' sum to carry out additional work here has been included in the tender. In addition, our faculty from the Diocese, our permission to carry out the work, does include replacing the tiles with



new ones, of the same colour and pattern if that proves to be necessary. There will be more on this topic in future reports.

As an aside you can see why laying the floor has taken a long time when you realise the complex curves that have to be accommodated in places, as at the Sanctuary step in the picture on the previous page.

The darker edging stone against the steps were cut at the quarry, but the matching curved edge on the lighter, larger stone tiles have been cut on site.

Meanwhile, laying of the stone floor tiles is complete apart from a small section where the part glazed screen is to be constructed between the Chancel and the Vestry corridor.

This will be finished off next week after discussions with the joiner, who is making the screen.

With the tiles laid they are now being cleaned, the joints grouted and the surface sealed. The picture shows this complete in the North Aisle and you can see the final colour of the tiles, particularly the darker edging strips.

With the floor complete the pulpit can be moved back into the Nave from its storage place in the Sanctuary, and work can start on sorting out the level issues in the tiled area.

*Chris Young, 16<sup>h</sup> October 2017*